



## **Leader's Report**

**1 February 2012**

### **Report of the Leader of the Council**

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To present the Leader's report to Council.

This report is public.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**To receive the report of the Leader of Council.**

#### **REPORT**

##### **1.0 Cabinet**

Information on Cabinet matters is provided in the minutes from the Cabinet meetings held on 6 December 2011, later in this agenda.

##### **2.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently**

As required by Access to Information Procedure Rule 17.04 and Part 4 Section 7 (5.1) of the Constitution, set out below are details of two decisions taken under the Urgent Business Procedure.

##### **2.1 Storey Creative Industries**

Details of the above decision and the reasons for urgency were set out in a report exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. This decision was a Key decision, but it had not been included on the Forward Plan. As such the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to this being treated as a matter of special urgency in accordance with Access to Information Procedure Rule 16, and gave approval for the Chief Executive to take the decision in advance of the usual five day's notice.

An urgent decision was taken on 20 December 2011. Additionally, the Chief Executive (in consultation with the chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee) was asked, and agreed, to waive call-in in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rule 17 (a).

## **2.2 Climate Change Invest to Save Projects**

An urgent decision was taken on 6 January 2012. The reason for urgency was to enable the project to be implemented within the 2011/12 financial year. As this Key Decision had not the Forward Plan for five clear working days, in accordance with Access to Information Procedure 16, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was requested and agreed to waive the requirement for notice of the decision to be included in the Forward Plan for five clear working days before the decision was taken.

Details of the decision are as follows:

- (1) That Cabinet re-affirms its decision of the 4 October 2011, namely :

That Cabinet approves the allocation of £750,000 from the General Fund's Invest to Save Reserve to install solar photo voltaic (PV) panels on the Council's municipal buildings.

That Cabinet approves the allocation of £1M from the Housing Revenue Account's Major Repairs Reserve to install solar photo voltaic (PV) panels on council housing communal buildings.

That a further report is brought back to Cabinet on developing the Council's wider approach to the use of renewable energy.

- (2) That Cabinet notes the recent judicial review of the government's proposed changes to the tariff rates and the government's intention to appeal that decision in January 2012 and that Cabinet authorises officers to continue with this project and delegates to the chief executive the authority to proceed even if the parameters are changed, as long as the estimated payback period for the overall project does not exceed 15 years.

Additionally, the Chief Executive (in consultation with the chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee) was asked, and agreed, to waive call-in in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rule 17 (a).

## **3.0 Leader's Comments**

The Lancashire District Leaders' Forum met on 05 December 2011. Three Tier Forums were discussed and the Chair asked for feedback from the first meetings. The general view was that the meetings had been quite positive. If members feel differently or have anything to add, please contact me.

A "wait and see" approach was the general opinion on the Pay Settlement in view of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement and other government comments.

Concern was expressed about financial pressures that will affect our ability to maintain grants to various worthwhile bodies and a discussion on the possible crossover of welfare organisation is to be discussed at a future meeting.

There was a short discussion on Enterprise Zones with some districts feeling that there needed to be more involvement from local MPs and the private sector. Lancashire County Council is playing a major role. At the Lancashire Leaders' Group, a presentation on the Police Authority Budget was given with discussion on the impact on frontline policing. The role of the new Police Commissioner, to be elected in November, was discussed and its possible effects. Concerns about PCSOs funding were expressed and we were assured that Neighbourhood Policing would continue.

Again there was an update on the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership and on the need to succeed in submissions in order to gain more funding in the future.

There was a report on Health Reforms within Lancashire and the setting up of a Shadow Board, and another report on a Lancashire Total Culture Programme and Business Plan to improve partnership working, efficiency and delivery.

I attended an Arts Council meeting on the 15 December with Councillor Sands and Chief Officers of the City and County. We were able to question the reduced funding for Lancaster and Lancashire and to impress upon the Arts Council representatives that we feel that Lancaster is an "Arts City" and that the arts bring tourists and major economic advantages to our area.

A meeting with Lancaster University representatives on 21 December agreed that Councillor Paul Aitchison will now be asked to attend the University Council meetings until they decide to change their statutes which will take time.

Since the New Year, my time has mainly been spent in Budget meetings with each Cabinet Member. We examined each line of their budgets and made savings.

A Police representative came to talk to us on 10 January about the possible impact on community Safety of the New Police and Crime Commission.

On the 16 January the new chair of the Vision Board came to talk about relationships with the City, and the agenda for the meeting on the 30 January.

A difficult meeting of the LDLSP Management Group was held on 17 January where the winding up of the LDLSP was discussed. A meeting of the LDLSP Board is to be held in February to make the decision.

#### **4.0 Other Matters**

Cabinet minutes are attached at the end of this agenda.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Cabinet agenda and minutes of the meeting on 6 December 2011.